

The Seven **Golden** Rules to Guarantee Success



Your key strategy and your biggest challenge will be to deliver fantastic customer service. This means that sometimes you will have to accept that regardless of your legal position, your common sense, or just the plain fact that you know that what you have done is correct and the customer is not perhaps as honest as you would like them to be - they may be making false claims - customer challenges will happen and they will cost you money. You need to get over it and deliver the good customer service by taking the hit. We go into massive detail on all the below in the web site.

1. BRILLIANT CUSTOMER SERVICE

This starts even before the customer places the order. It's your feedback, it's your reviews, and it's your description of the product along with good photographs that start to build brilliant customer service. Where possible use a FAQ page (frequently asked questions) to deal with such enquiries as when do you normally ship, how do I pay, and what is your address for me to send you a postal money order or cheque. Over a period of time you will build up a list of frequently asked questions; use that list to create your FAQ page.

Top Tip: Rule number one is that the customer is always right. Rule number two is that if ever the customer is wrong, re-read the rule number one.

2. OVER DELIVER AND UNDER PROMISE

One way I get massive and exceptional feedback is by ensuring that the customer's expectations are managed to a point that they think my team is totally excellent, which of course they are.

Top Tip: You're only as good as your last piece of feedback.

3. STAY IN TOUCH

Communication! Talk to your customer, make them feel valuable, and let them believe that they are the most important person in the world. They see themselves as most important people in the world and they need to feel valued.

4. FIX PROBLEMS - DO NOT PROCRASTINATE
It's very common for small businesses to protect their position and not necessarily fix the problem. Do not procrastinate when a problem arises. Go out of your way to fix it quickly, and show the customer that you have a sense of urgency in dealing with the matter

5. WOULD YOU ACCEPT YOUR OWN CUSTOMER SERVICE?

Take a look at your terms and conditions that your business presently operates in, and with a fresh cup of coffee and an open mind go through your customer service procedures as if you were a customer on the receiving end of them. Would you be happy with your customer service?

6. MANAGE YOUR FEEDBACK WEBSITE COMMENTS

If you're using your own web shop then it's vital that you obtain customer feedback. The best way to do this is to allow comments to be posted directly to your website, but ensure that all comments have to be viewed and/or edited by you before they go on the website as you need to maintain and retain control over those comments.

As a word of caution I would urge you not to falsify any comments or reviews to your website. Not only is this misleading but it also calls into question your own personal integrity and the integrity of your business. You need to be dealing with your customers from a point of view of openness and fairness where your honesty and integrity can never be questioned.

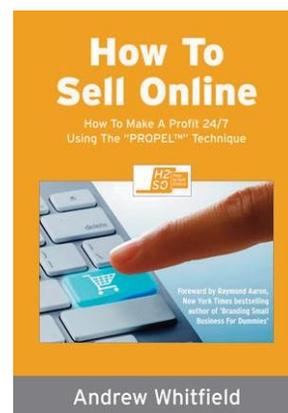
7. HONEST DESCRIPTIONS AND GOOD PHOTOGRAPHS

As you will gather from my previous comments customer service is key to having a business that works and that you can repeat sell time and time again. Two of the areas that you must pay very particular attention to are your descriptions and your photographs.

I see on a regular basis many items for sale with such a poor description that I do not know what I'm buying. People do not put item dimensions, they may not say whether it's new or used, if it's a limited edition, how much does it weigh, what are its features and how do they benefit me. I get lots of feedback from my customers with the words "as described," which tells me that the time I have taken to ensure the description is accurate has been well worth it.

Top Tip: Use a little reverse engineering when listing items. Have a look at any competitors who are selling the same or similar items, and review their descriptions. Take the best points that capture your focus and adapt those to the items you are listing.

Always look at a listing from the point of view of what you would want to read about the item in both its description along with its technical detail. Always keep it simple and well structured.



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Andrew has been doing this for many years and is here to help your online retail business. His own business sources worldwide, promotes online and ships worldwide.

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